



THE BKSTS/CEA ALL INDUSTRY PROJECTION CERTIFICATION SCHEME

The Cinema Technology Committee of the BKSTS, (British Kinematograph, Sound and Television Society), devised the Projection Certification Scheme, along with support from Technical Managers from some of the major UK exhibitors. The reasoning behind this being the apparent reduction in the quality of film projection and film care, and the need to have industry standards to satisfy any future legislation on working practices in cinemas.

It works by having a set of minimum standards for the training of projectionists, which when achieved by passing an assessment, leads to an award of a certificate confirming that they are considered to be a competent projectionist.

It is not a training scheme in itself, but any training scheme would need to meet the minimum standards, whether a company scheme or an individual self-teaching so that any assessment would be against the same criteria.

The scheme is open to all, whether a trainee projectionist or a qualified projectionist who wants their skills recognised.

There have been a number of requests for further information about the scheme; therefore, this set of questions and answers has been prepared for those wanting to participate.

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HOW DO I APPLY TO TAKE PART?

You have taken the first step in asking for more information.

There is one scheme but it can be approached in two ways; one is for someone who is working in a cinema belonging to a company who are supporting the scheme, and the other is for those working for a smaller company or in a single independent cinema.

Larger companies will have structured training schemes, and the certification scheme was drawn up to contain many elements from these courses, whereas if you are working in a smaller or single cinema, you will be trying to gain all your projectionist skills on your own.

At the moment, although most of the major cinema companies were involved in setting up this scheme, Odeon and Empire Cinemas are the only companies who are actively supporting the scheme, and if you are new trainee technician employed by Odeon or Empire you will find that your training will include continuous assessment, and eventually, leading to a certificate.

For other prospective projectionists, or experienced projectionists who want a certificate, you will need the Introduction for Projectionists This lists all the standards that are expected of someone to be considered a competent projectionist, along with notes of what an assessor would be looking for.

Regardless of whether you are one or the other of these two examples, I am attaching the Introduction as a pdf so that you can what is required.

If you have a formal training scheme at your cinema, you will find that most of what you need to know will be covered in your training, and in the Introduction. If someone is training you, they will take you through all the requirements of the scheme. Once they feel that you are ready, they will put you forward for assessment.

If however you are teaching yourself, your best way of acquiring the necessary knowledge is from the BKSTS/CEA Motion Picture Presentation manual, of which a few copies are still available from the Society.

HOW DO I GET AN ASSESSMENT?

A large company will have already nominated assessors, and they will assess you, and fill in the appropriate Record Sheet. They will send all the documentation to the administrator, along with the fee for registration, and for the Certificate.

They might carry out the assessment in one go, or you might be assessed as you progress through your training. Either method is acceptable; the only requirement is to prove that you meet all the standards.

If however, you are an Independent, and do not have an assessor, you can either find one yourself, or the committee will attempt to find one within your area.

If you have been trained by someone in your company, it is likely that this person would also qualify as an assessor, however he, or she, would have to be approved by the Committee so that they can ensure that the standards will be met.

If you have been training yourself, you can nominate an assessor yourself, but again, we would need to approve him. If you do not have an assessor, the committee will try to find one for you.

The likelihood here is that your assessment would be carried out in one visit, so you should be confident that you are ready.

The assessor will run through the different sections of the standards, and at the end will have filled in your Personal Record Sheet.

If there are parts where he feels you have not met the standards, he will tell you. You would then need another assessment later. However, there are no trick questions, just the knowledge needed to do the job.

If you are successful, you will be given the completed Personal Record Sheet.

You will need to send this to the Scheme Administrator, along with your name, as you want it to appear on the Certificate, and your address for the register. You will also need to send a cheque for five pounds for the printing and postage of the Certificate.

HOW MUCH DOES IT COST TO TAKE PART?

The scheme start-up costs were covered by a grant from the David Lean Foundation, which covered all the start-up costs. The scheme was devised to be circulated by e-mail, and initially there is nothing to pay. If you do not have access to e-mail, everything can be sent out by post at no extra cost.

If the scheme is run within a company, they will arrange for you to be assessed at your own cinema, using their own senior members of staff. They will take care of the paperwork, and will also pay for your Certificate.

If you are applying on your own, the paperwork will still be sent out for nothing. You can work through the standards listed in the Projectionists Introduction at your own speed. Once you feel you have reached the desired standard, you will then need the assessment.

You have two options: - you find your assessor and pay him yourself; or that you let the committee find you an assessor. In this case, you might have to pay for their travel and other expenses. However, this should not be a bar to applying. The committee are arranging for a number of volunteer assessors, who may be able to carry out these for a reduced or possibly, no cost at all.

Please remember, there is no commitment prior to asking for an assessment, or for taking part in the first part, namely meeting the standards, so by all means make an application.

WHY SHOULD I BOTHER?

A projectionist doesn't just put a picture on the screen, he presents it. This needs more knowledge than just lacing up and re-setting the automation. A projectionist cares, and wants to learn more. He, or she, is interested in learning the technology behind the job. Lacing up and starting is important, but there are so many other things necessary for putting on a show.

All of these are listed in the Projectionist's Introduction, but include box cleanliness, making up and breaking down, film care, projection theory, and understanding different screen ratios and sound formats. All of these and more can be found in the BKSTS Projectionists Manual.

A 'booth operator' is the terminology for multi-tasking staff, who work as customer service staff as well as working in projection rooms. They are taught how to lace up a film, how to start the projector, and other basic requirements of putting an image on the screen.

However, many booth operators find that they like the work, and want to learn more. This we have found from the numbers that attend the David Lean sponsored training courses held by the BKSTS. Following the guidelines in the Projectionist's Introduction, and meeting all the requirements will enable you to have your own certificate proving that you are a competent projectionist.

I WANT TO TAKE PART - WHAT DO I DO NEXT?

You just e-mail me at: - aemac@talktalk.net

Tell me who you are, where you work, and where you want the paperwork sent. Tell me whether you have your own assessor, or whether you want us to find one for you. Either way, you will receive a copy of the Projectionist's Introduction, which you can work through with your company's training scheme, or on your own.

If you prefer to use post, please write to: -

*Alan McCann, Scheme Administrator,
BKSTS/CEA Projection Certification,
Hunts Cottage,
Main Street,
Peasmarsh, Rye,
East Sussex.
TN31 6SP*

Remember, there is nothing to pay until you apply for a certificate, and there is no time limit for meeting the standards.

*Take a pride in the job that you do - - - -
Become a good projectionist - - - -
And get a certificate to prove it!*